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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

REPORTS

2009 COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State. March 11, 2010.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/index.htm>

This report is submitted to the Congress by the Department of State in compliance with Sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), as amended. "2009 was a year in which ethnic, racial, and religious tensions led to violent conflicts and serious human rights violations and fueled or exacerbated more than 30 wars or internal armed conflicts. 2009 also was a year in which more people gained greater access than ever before to more information about human rights through the Internet, and other forms of connective technologies. Yet at the same time it was a year in which governments spent more time, money, and attention finding regulatory and technical means to curtail freedom of expression on the Internet. This report explores these and other trends and developments and provides a specific, detailed picture of human rights conditions in 194 countries around the world. The reason for publishing this report is to develop a full, factual record that can help U.S. policymakers to make well-informed policy decisions. Many have questioned the reason the U.S. Government compiles this report, rather than the United Nations or some other intergovernmental body. One answer is that we believe it is imperative for countries, including our own, to ensure that respect for human rights is an integral component of foreign policy. These reports provide an overview of the human rights situation around the world as a means to raise awareness about human rights conditions, in particular as these conditions impact the well-being of women, children, racial minorities, trafficking victims, members of indigenous groups and ethnic communities, persons with disabilities, sexual minorities, and members of other vulnerable groups."

INTERNET FREEDOM IN THE 21ST CENTURY: INTEGRATING NEW TECHNOLOGIES INTO DIPLOMACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State. February 4, 2010.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/scp/fs/2010/136702.htm>

In a January 2010 address at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton delivered a major foreign policy address on Internet Freedom. Secretary Clinton emphasized a commitment to defending the freedom of expression and the free flow of information in the 21st century. "The free flow of information and ideas over digital technologies is in our national and global interests: it is important for economic growth; for U.S. diplomatic relationships; for building sustainable democratic societies; and for meeting global challenges in the years and decades ahead."

QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW

US Department of Defense. February 2010 [PDF format, 124 pages]

http://www.defense.gov/qdr/images/QDR_as_of_12Feb10_1000.pdf

"The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) is a legislatively-mandated review of Department of Defense strategy and priorities. The QDR will set a long-term course for DoD as it assesses the threats and challenges that the nation faces and re-balances DoD's strategies, capabilities, and forces to address today's conflicts and tomorrow's threats. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review advances two clear objectives. First, to further rebalance the capabilities of America's Armed Forces to prevail in today's wars, while building the capabilities needed to deal with future threats. Second, to further reform the Department's institutions and processes to better support the urgent needs of the war fighter; buy weapons that are usable, affordable, and truly needed; and ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and responsibly. The United States faces a complex and uncertain security landscape in which the pace of change continues to accelerate. The distribution of global political, economic, and military power is becoming more diffuse. The rise of China, the world's most populous country, and India, the world's largest democracy, will continue to shape an international system that is no longer easily defined—one in which the United States will remain the most powerful actor but must increasingly work with key allies and partners if it is to sustain stability and peace."

AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN REGIONAL STABILIZATION STRATEGY

Office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, U.S. Department of State. January 21, 2010 [PDF format, 50 pages]

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/135728.pdf>

"Far from an exercise in "nation-building," the programs detailed here aim to achieve realistic progress in critical areas. They are aligned with our security objectives and have been developed in close consultation with the Afghan and Pakistani governments, as well as our international partners. When combined with U.S. combat operations and efforts to build Afghan and Pakistani security capacity, these programs constitute an innovative, whole-of-government strategy to protect our vital interests in this volatile region of the world. Achieving progress will require continued sacrifice not only by our military personnel, but also by the more than 1,500 U.S. government civilians serving in Afghanistan and Pakistan. But for the first time since this conflict began, we have a true whole-of-government approach. The Afghan and Pakistani governments have endorsed this strategy and are committed to achieving our shared objectives."

NEGOTIATIONS AND RECONCILIATION WITH THE TALIBAN: THE KEY POLICY ISSUES AND DILEMMAS

Felbab-Brown, Vanda. Brookings Institution. January 28, 2010 [PDF format, 6 pages]

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/articles/2010/0128_taliban_felbabbrown/0128_taliban_felbabbrown.pdf

"London conference on Afghanistan where the Afghan government, Britain, and Japan have presented their plans for reconciliation with the Taliban has reignited a months-long debate about whether or not to negotiate with the salafi insurgents. But although passions run strong on both sides of the debate, in its abstract form– negotiate: yes or no – the discussion is of little policy usefulness. The real question about negotiating with the Taliban is what shape and content any such negotiation and reconciliation should have and what are the costs and benefits of such an approach." Vanda Felbab-Brown is a fellow in Foreign Policy and in the 21st Century Defense Initiative at Brookings. She is also an adjunct professor in the Security Studies Program, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University.

FIXING INTEL: A BLUEPRINT FOR MAKING INTELLIGENCE RELEVANT IN AFGHANISTAN

Flynn, Major General Michael T., et. al. Center for a New American Security. January, 2010 [PDF format, 28 pages]

http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/AfghanIntel_Flynn_Jan2010_code507_voices.pdf

"This paper critically examines the relevance of the U.S. intelligence community to the counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan. Based on discussions with hundreds of people inside and outside the intelligence community, it recommends sweeping changes to the way the intelligence community thinks about itself – from a focus on the enemy to a focus on the people of Afghanistan. The paper argues that because the United States has focused the overwhelming majority of collection efforts and analytical brainpower on insurgent groups, our intelligence apparatus still finds itself unable to answer fundamental questions about the environment in which we operate and the people we are trying to protect and persuade." *Major General Michael T. Flynn has been Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence (CJ2), for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan since June 2009.*

THE FUTURE OF NATO

Goldgeier, James M. Council on Foreign Relations [Council Special Report No. 51] February 2010 [PDF format, 61 pages]

http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/NATO_CSR51.pdf

In this Council Special Report, the author takes on the question of how NATO, having successfully kept the peace in Europe in the twentieth century, can adapt to the challenges of the twenty-first. Goldgeier contends that NATO retains value for the United States and Europe. He writes, though, that it must expand its vision of collective defense in order to remain relevant and effective. This means recognizing the full range of threats that confront NATO members today and affirming that the alliance will respond collectively to an act (whether by an outside state or a nonstate entity) that imperils the political or economic security or territorial integrity of a member state. Examining a range of other issues, the report argues that NATO should expand its cooperation with non-European democracies, such as Australia and Japan; outlines steps to improve NATO's relations with Russia; and urges greater cooperation between NATO and the European Union. Finally, on the issue of enlargement, the report supports the current policy of keeping the door open to Georgia and Ukraine while recognizing that they will not join the alliance anytime soon. *James M. Goldgeier is the Whitney Shepardson senior fellow for transatlantic relations at the Council on Foreign Relations. He is also a professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University.*

PRINCIPLES OF U.S. ENGAGEMENT IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

Testimony of Kurt M. Campbell before the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Senate Foreign Relations Committee. January 21, 2010 [PDF format, 9 pages]
<http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2010/CampbellTestimony100121a.pdf>

Kurt M. Campbell, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, briefly lists the steps the U.S. Government have undertaken over the past year to step up and broaden U.S. engagement in the region. "The Asia-Pacific region is of vital and permanent importance to the United States and it is clear that countries in the region want the United States to maintain a strong and active presence. We need to ensure that the United States is a resident power and not just a visitor, because what happens in the region has a direct effect on our security and economic well-being. Over the course of the next few decades climate change, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and widespread poverty will pose the most significant challenges to the United States and the rest of the region. These challenges are and will continue to be most acute in East Asia. The United States faces a number of critical challenges in the coming years in its engagement with Asia. We need to play an active role in helping the countries of the region to enhance their capacity to succeed. The region is vital to U.S. interests not only in the Asia-Pacific context, but also globally. We are a vital contributor to the region's security and economic success. The Asia-Pacific region, in turn, has a profound impact on our lives through trade, our alliances, and partnerships. As the region continues to grow and as new groupings and structures take shape, the United States will be a player, not a distant spectator."

IRAQI VOICES ENTERING 2010

Barber, Rusty ; Taylor, William B. Jr. U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP). January 12, 2010 [PDF format, 4 pages]
<http://www.usip.org/files/resources/PB%203%20Iraqi%20Voices%20Entering%202010.pdf>

As the U.S. prepares to leave Iraq, the U.S. Institute of Peace examines the impact of Iraq's emerging civil society on politics, and what the U.S. can and should do to ensure continued progress. This report is based on a visit to Baghdad in December by the authors of this brief during which they met with a broad crosscut of Iraqi political and civil society leaders and with U.S and international officials." Since 2004, USIP has maintained an office in Baghdad staffed by Iraqis and Americans and dedicated to helping Iraq achieve peace and stability through reconciliation, expanded civil society and improved self-governance." *Rusty Barber is USIP's Director of Iraq Programs, Center for Post-Conflict Peace and Stability Operations. William Taylor is the Vice President of the Center for Post-Conflict Peace and Stability Operations at USIP.*

STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING POLITICAL ISLAM

Hamid, Shadi; Kadlec, Amanda. Project on Middle East Democracy; Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. January 2010 [PDF format, 18 pages]
http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2010/01_political_islam_hamid/01_political_islam_hamid.pdf

"Political Islam is the single most active political force in the Middle East today. Its future is intimately tied to that of the region. If the United States and the European Union are committed to supporting political reform in the region, they will need to devise concrete, coherent strategies for engaging Islamist groups. The U.S. and EU have a number of programs that address economic and political development in the region – among them the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the Union for the Mediterranean, and the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) – yet they have little to say about how the challenge of Islamist political opposition fits within broader

regional objectives. U.S. and EU democracy assistance and programming are directed almost entirely to either authoritarian governments themselves or secular civil society groups with minimal support in their own societies. The time is ripe for a reassessment of current policies. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, supporting Middle East democracy has assumed a greater importance for Western policymakers who see a link between lack of democracy and political violence. Greater attention has been devoted to understanding the variations within political Islam. The new American administration is more open to broadening communication with the Muslim world." *Shadi Hamid is Deputy Director of the Brookings Doha Center and Fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution. Amanda Kadlec is a former Dialogue Fellow at the Project on Middle East Democracy. Her most recent work includes research positions at the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Cairo, Egypt and the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in Washington, D.C.*

IN PURSUIT OF DEMOCRACY AND SECURITY IN THE GREATER MIDDLE EAST

Brumberg, Daniel. U.S. Institute of Peace. January 21, 2010 [PDF format, 73 pages]
<http://www.usip.org/files/resources/Reform%20and%20Security%20WP%201.21.pdf>

This report summarizes the work of a USIP Study Group established in February 2008. "This report offers a set of general and country-specific findings and recommendations to assist the Obama administration in its efforts to tackle escalating security challenges while sustaining diplomatic, institutional and economic support for democracy and human rights in the Greater Middle East. The working group recognizes that addressing threats from terrorist groups affiliated with al-Qaeda, as well as stemming conflicts arising from the persistence of regional conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia, must be a top priority. But, as the case studies of Yemen, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon amply demonstrate, long-term political stability, economic development and security also requires a continued and even enhanced U.S. commitment, in both words and deeds, to fostering democratic transformation, human rights and effective governance. The architecture of security and peacemaking must be accompanied by a revived focus on democratic reforms." Dr. *Daniel Brumberg is Acting Director of the Muslim World Initiative at the U.S. Institute of Peace and Co-Director of Democracy and Governance Studies at Georgetown University, where he is an Associate Professor of Government.*

AL QAEDA IN YEMEN AND SOMALIA: A TICKING TIME BOMB

Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate. January, 21, 2010 [PDF format, 24 pages]
<http://foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Yemen.pdf>

"This report by the committee majority staff is part of our ongoing examination of Al Qaeda's role in international terrorism. U.S. and allied operations over the past several years have largely pushed Al Qaeda out of Afghanistan and Iraq. Many of those fighters traveled to the tribal region on the Pakistani side of the border with Afghanistan. But ongoing U.S. and Pakistani military and intelligence operations there have made it an increasingly inhospitable place for Al Qaeda. Consequently, hundreds-or perhaps even thousands-of fighters have gone elsewhere. New Al Qaeda cells or allied groups have sprung up in North Africa, Southeast Asia, and perhaps most importantly in Yemen and Somalia. These groups may have only an informal connection with Al Qaeda's leadership in Pakistan, but they often share common goals. Al Qaeda's recruitment tactics also have changed. The group seeks to recruit American citizens to carry out terrorist attacks in the United States. While most of our counter-terrorism resources are rightly focused on Afghanistan and Pakistan, the potential threats from Yemen and Somalia pose new challenges for the United States and other countries fighting extremism worldwide. President Obama has pledged to

strengthen our relationship with the Yemeni government through increased military and intelligence cooperation. Addressing emerging dangers in Yemen and elsewhere in the region constitutes a vital national security interest, and this report is intended to provide information that will help guide us in that mission. This report relies on new and existing information to explore the current and changing threat posed by Al Qaeda, not just abroad, but here at home.”

AL QAEDA AND AFFILIATES: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE, GLOBAL PRESENCE, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

Rollins, John. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. February 5, 2010 [PDF format, 32 pages]

http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R41070_20100205.pdf

“Al Qaeda (AQ) has evolved into a significantly different terrorist organization than the one that perpetrated the September 11, 2001, attacks. At the time, Al Qaeda was composed mostly of a core cadre of veterans of the Afghan insurgency against the Soviets, with a centralized leadership structure, made up mostly of Egyptians. Understanding the origins of Al Qaeda, its goals, current activities, and prospective future pursuits is key to developing sound U.S. strategies, policies, and programs. Appreciating the adaptive nature of Al Qaeda as a movement and the ongoing threat it projects onto U.S. global security interests assists in many facets of the national security enterprise; including, securing the homeland, congressional legislative process and oversight, alignment of executive branch resources and coordination efforts, and prioritization of foreign assistance. The focus of the report is on the history of Al Qaeda, actions and capabilities of the organization and non-aligned entities, and an analysis of select regional Al Qaeda affiliates.” *John Rollins, Coordinator, Acting Section Research Manager/Specialist in Terrorism and National Security.*

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND TRANSNATIONAL CRIME: SECURITY THREATS, U.S. POLICY, AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR CONGRESS

Rollins, John, et. al. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. January 5, 2010 [PDF format, 56 pages]

http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R41004_20100105.pdf

“U.S. efforts to combat the relationship between crime and terrorism are a subset of broader policy responses to transnational crime and international terrorism individually. While numerous U.S. strategies and programs are designed to combat international terrorism and transnational crime separately, fewer efforts focus specifically on addressing the confluence of the two. Those efforts that do exist focus mainly on (1) human smuggling and clandestine terrorist travel, (2) money laundering and terrorist financing, and (3) narcoterrorism links between drug traffickers and terrorists. This report provides a primer on the confluence of transnational terrorist and criminal groups and related activities abroad. It evaluates possible motivations and disincentives for cooperation between terrorist and criminal organizations, variations in the scope of crime-terrorism links, and the types of criminal activities—fundraising, material and logistics support, and exploitation of corruption and gaps in the rule of law—used by terrorist organizations to sustain operations. Policy considerations discussed in this report include possible tensions between counterterrorism and anti-crime policy objectives, implications for U.S. foreign aid, gaps in human intelligence and analysis, the value of financial intelligence in combating the crime-terrorism nexus, impact of digital and physical safe havens and ungoverned spaces, implications for nuclear proliferation, and effects of crime terrorism links in conflict and post-conflict zones.” *John Rollins, Coordinator, is Acting Section Research Manager/Specialist in Terrorism and National Security at the Congressional Research Service.*

CONFRONTING THE LONG CRISIS OF GLOBALIZATION: RISK, RESILIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Evans, Alex; Jones, Bruce; Steven, David. Brookings Institution; Center on International Cooperation, New York University. January 26, 2010 [Note: contains copyrighted material] [PDF format, 50 pages]

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2010/01_globalization_evans_jones_steven/01_globalization_evans_jones_steven.pdf

"The nature of risks to global security has changed dramatically since the fall of the Berlin Wall, but our mechanisms for preventing, responding and adapting to them have lagged far behind. While there have been limited efforts to develop more effective international responses, these have been piecemeal and have produced only modest increases in global resilience. The past twelve months have increased pressure on the international system. The arrival of a new US administration, the more assertive multilateral stance taken by China, India, Russia and Brazil, and above all the credit crunch and subsequent global downturn, have increased demand for more effective management of global challenges – while at the same time creating fresh obstacles to achieving this goal. In this think piece, we explore how current opportunities can be used to catalyze the transformation we need to create a more effective international system. World leaders, we argue, need a new lens through which they can view the task of creating security in the 21st century. Globalization presents a paradox: it has simultaneously increased both *prosperity* and *risk*. Assuming that current underlying stresses continue to grow, the international system is likely to reach a tipping point. On one side of this balance lies an international system that has been degraded by crisis, and has experienced a sizeable, and probably rapid, loss of function and trust. On the other there is a more robust international order, with significantly enhanced capacity to produce the collective goods needed to manage risk." *Alex Evans is a Non-Resident Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation (CIC) at New York University, where he works on climate change, resource scarcity and global public goods. Bruce Jones is Director and Senior Fellow of CIC and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, where he directs the Managing Global Insecurity Initiative. David Steven is a Non-Resident Fellow at CIC, where he specializes in risk and resilience.*

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE REFORM: AN AMERICAN VIEW OF US LEADERSHIP

Patrick, Stewart. The Stanley Foundation [Policy Analysis Brief] February 2010 [PDF format, 19 pages]

<http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/publications/pab/PatrickPAB210.pdf>

"President Barack Obama has trumpeted a "new era of engagement" for the United States. The central components of his strategy include a world order characterized by peaceful accommodation between established and rising powers; the collective management of transnational problems; and the overhaul of international institutions to reflect these shifting power dynamics and the new global agenda. Placing less emphasis than his predecessor on the pursuit of American primacy, Obama envisions—indeed, insists—that other global powers assume new responsibilities. Notwithstanding its multilateral instincts, though, the Obama administration is limited in its practical ability to promote and embrace sweeping reforms to global governance. Therefore, rather than casting its lot entirely with universal organizations like the United Nations, the United States will adopt a pragmatic approach to international cooperation that combines formal institutions with more flexible partnerships to achieve US national interests. The balance sheet for Obama's first year in office underscores both the opportunities for, and the constraints on, global governance reform in the current geopolitical environment." *Stewart Patrick is senior fellow and director*

of the International Institutions and Global Governance program at the Council on Foreign Relations.

TROUBLED PARTNERSHIP: U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS IN AN ERA OF GLOBAL GEOPOLITICAL CHANGE

Larrabee, F. Stephen. RAND Corporation. February 3, 2010 [Note: contains copyrighted material] [PDF format, 164 pages]

http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG899.pdf

"A strong security partnership with Turkey has been an important element of U.S. policy in the Mediterranean and the Middle East since the early 1950s. It is even more important today. Turkey stands at the nexus of four areas that have become increasingly critical to U.S. security since the end of the Cold War: the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus/Central Asia, and the Persian Gulf region. In all four areas, Turkey's cooperation is vital for achieving U.S. policy goals. However, in the last few years—and especially since 2003— U.S.-Turkish relations have seriously deteriorated. The arrival of a new administration in Washington presents an important opportunity for repairing the fissures in the U.S.-Turkish security partnership and putting relations on a firmer footing. This monograph examines the causes of recent strains in the U.S.-Turkish security partnership and options for reducing these strains." *F. Stephen Larrabee is Distinguished Chair in European Security at the RAND Corporation.*

OBAMA IN THE AMERICAS: SEARCHING FOR AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY

Noriega, Roger F. American Enterprise Institute. January 2010. [PDF format, 7 pages]

<http://www.aei.org/docLib/1LAO2010g.pdf>

"President Barack Obama's policy toward the Americas in 2009 seemed more improvisational than purposeful, but 2010 is likely to bring challenges that require a strategic U.S. response. It is hoped that the Obama administration has learned from several events and circumstances of the past year and will make U.S. policy in the region more effective going forward. The Obama administration must be prepared to respond to growing instability in Venezuela, improve relations with Brazil during a presidential transition, strengthen ties with Colombia, and provide more robust antidrug assistance to Mexico." *Roger F. Noriega a senior State Department official from 2001 to 2005, is a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.*

THE WORLD ORDER IN 2050

Dadush, Uri; Ali, Shimelse. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. February 2010 [PDF format, 31 pages]

http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/The_World_Order_in_2050.pdf

"The world's economic balance of power is shifting, as emerging countries rapidly overtake traditional Western powers as the predominant world economies. The recent global recession has only accelerated this trend. Traditional Western powers will remain the wealthiest nations in terms of per capita income, but will be overtaken as the predominant world economies by much poorer countries. Given the sheer magnitude of the challenge of lower-wage competition, protectionist pressures in advanced economies may escalate. The global economic transformation will shift international relations in unpredictable ways. To retain their historic influence, European nations will be pressed to conduct foreign policy jointly—an objective implied by their recently ratified constitution—and will need to reach out to emerging powers. Japan and Russia will seek new frameworks of alliances. The largest emerging nations may come to see each other as rivals." *Uri Dadush is senior*

associate and director in Carnegie's new International Economics Program. Bennett Stancil is a junior fellow in Carnegie's International Economics Program.

A WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. February 2010.
<http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/0210.html>

"Since the first atomic bombs exploded in 1945, some have tried to rid the world of nuclear weapons. President Obama has embraced this goal with new vigor. This electronic journal examines the challenges to achieving nuclear disarmament. It conveys the hopes of some thinkers, and explains the doubts of others. Our contributors approach the issue from every angle. Most agree with President Obama's objective, although one, a former U.S. national security adviser, argues that the world may be safer with a few acknowledged nuclear weapons than with promises that all have been foresworn. Feature essays explore the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and consider what a treaty abolishing nuclear weapons might look like. We review Obama administration policy, and also how the issues look from the Russian vantage point, and from the perspective of nations that choose not to proliferate. We outline past arms control efforts — some produced better results than others."

ARTICLES

FROM HOPE TO AUDACITY: APPRAISING OBAMA'S FOREIGN POLICY

Brzezinski, Zbigniew. *Foreign Affairs*. January/February 2010.

"The foreign policy of U.S. President Barack Obama can be assessed most usefully in two parts: first, his goals and decision-making system and, second, his policies and their implementation. Although one can speak with some confidence about the former, the latter is still an unfolding process. To his credit, Obama has undertaken a truly ambitious effort to redefine the United States' view of the world and to reconnect the United States with the emerging historical context of the twenty-first century. He has done this remarkably well. In less than a year, he has comprehensively reconceptualized U.S. foreign policy with respect to several centrally important geopolitical issues: (1) Islam is not an enemy, and the "global war on terror" does not define the United States' current role in the world; (2) the United States will be a fair-minded and assertive mediator when it comes to attaining lasting peace between Israel and Palestine; (3) the United States ought to pursue serious negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program, as well as other issues; (4) the counterinsurgency campaign in the Taliban-controlled parts of Afghanistan should be part of a larger political undertaking, rather than a predominantly military one; (5) the United States should respect Latin America's cultural and historical sensitivities and expand its contacts with Cuba; (6) the United States ought to energize its commitment to significantly reducing its nuclear arsenal and embrace the eventual goal of a world free of nuclear weapons; (7) in coping with global problems, China should be treated not only as an economic partner but also as a geopolitical one; (8) improving U.S.-Russian relations is in the obvious interest of both sides, although this must be done in a manner that accepts, rather than seeks to undo, post-Cold War geopolitical realities; and a truly collegial transatlantic partnership should be given deeper meaning, particularly in order to heal the rifts caused by the destructive controversies of the past few years." *Zbigniew Brzezinski was U.S. National Security Adviser from 1977 to 1981. His most recent book is Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower (Basic Books, 2007).*

THE CARTER SYNDROME

Russell Mead, Walter. *Foreign Policy*. January/February 2010.
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/01/04/the_carter_syndrome?page=0,0

"Like many of his predecessors, Obama is not only buffeted by strong political headwinds, but also pulled in opposing directions by two of the major schools of thought that have guided American foreign-policy debates since colonial times. In general, U.S. presidents see the world through the eyes of four giants: Alexander Hamilton, Woodrow Wilson, Thomas Jefferson, and Andrew Jackson. Hamiltonians share the first Treasury secretary's belief that a strong national government and a strong military should pursue a realist global policy and that the government can and should promote economic development and the interests of American business at home and abroad. Wilsonians agree with Hamiltonians on the need for a global foreign policy, but see the promotion of democracy and human rights as the core elements of American grand strategy. Jeffersonians dissent from this globalist consensus; they want the United States to minimize its commitments and, as much as possible, dismantle the national-security state. Jacksonians are today's Fox News watchers. They are populists suspicious of Hamiltonian business links, Wilsonian do-gooding, and Jeffersonian weakness. In the 21st century, American presidents have a new set of questions to consider. The nature of the international system and the place of the United States in it will have to be rethought as new powers rise, old ones continue to fade, and attention shifts from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The rapid technological development that is the hallmark of our era will reshape global society at a pace that challenges the ability of every country in the world to manage cascading, accelerating change. With great dignity and courage, Obama has embarked on a difficult and uncertain journey." *Walter Russell Mead is Henry A. Kissinger Senior Fellow for U.S. Foreign Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations.*

UNDERSTANDING SUPPORT FOR ISLAMIST MILITANCY IN PAKISTAN

Shapiro, Jacob N.; Fair, C. Christine. *International Security*. Winter 2009/10, pp. 79–118.

"Pakistan has used Islamist militants to pursue its regional interests since its inception in 1947. In the last ten years, however, Islamist militancy in Pakistan has become a key international security concern. Beyond a substantial investment in security assistance, U.S. and Western policies toward Pakistan over the last ten years have been geared toward encouraging economic and social development as an explicit means of diminishing the terrorist threat and turning back Islamization. An analysis of data from a nationally representative survey of urban Pakistanis refutes four influential conventional wisdoms about why Pakistanis support Islamic militancy. First, there is no clear relationship between poverty and support for militancy. If anything, support for militant organizations is increasing in terms of both subjective economic well-being and community economic performance. Second, personal religiosity and support for sharia law are poor predictors of support for Islamist militant organizations. Third, support for political goals espoused by legal Islamist parties is a weak indicator of support for militant organizations. Fourth, those who support core democratic principles or have faith in Pakistan's democratic process are not less supportive of militancy. Taken together, these results suggest that commonly prescribed solutions to Islamist militancy-economic development, democratization, and the like-may be irrelevant at best and might even be counterproductive." *Jacob N. Shapiro is Assistant Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University and Codirector of the Empirical Studies of Conflict Project. C. Christine Fair is Assistant Professor of Security Studies at Georgetown University*

FIGHTING RADICALISM, NOT "TERRORISM": ROOT CAUSES OF AN INTERNATIONAL ACTOR REDEFINED

Taşpınar, Ömer. *SAIS Review*. Summer/Fall 2009, pp.75-86.

"While debate over the root causes of terrorism rages in the West, extremists continue to lure destitute radicals to their cause. Counter-terrorism needs to place the breeding grounds for these impoverished sympathizers at the center of their efforts. A new strategy and a new method ought to be adopted to prevent radicals from becoming a threat in the form of terrorism. "Fighting radicalism with human development"—specifically social and economic development—should emerge as a new public narrative and long-term objective for a smarter effort at strategic counter-terrorism... American foreign policy urgently needs alternative strategies to address radicalism in the Islamic world. The new approach should seek to promote democratization, security, and economic development in a comprehensive and harmonious framework." Ömer Taşpınar is Professor of National Security Studies at the National War College and an adjunct professor at the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

NEGOTIATING WITH IRAN: REFLECTIONS FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Dobbins, James. *The Washington Quarterly*. January 2010, pp. 149-162.

http://www.twq.com/10january/docs/10jan_Dobbins.pdf

"As the United States conducts bilateral and multiparty negotiations with Iran, it is worth recalling the last, and perhaps only, occasion when the U.S. and revolutionary Iranian governments cooperated closely and effectively. It was almost eight years ago, immediately after the September 11, 2001 attacks. There is a popular perception that the United States spent that fall forming a broad international coalition and overthrowing the Taliban. It would be more accurate to state that, prompted by the attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., the United States moved to join an existing coalition that had been trying to overthrow the Taliban since the mid-1990s. That coalition consisted of India, Iran, and Russia, and within Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance insurgency. For thirty years, Washington and Tehran have communicated only intermittently and then usually at low levels. Given the distrust and misunderstanding that have built up on both sides, it would be remarkable if the recent reestablishment of higher level contact led to early breakthroughs. Yet, while engagement may not always produce accommodation, but it always yields information, which helps to create better policy. Thus, even failed negotiations are better than no negotiation at all." James Dobbins is the director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at RAND Corporation.

THE ARAB TOMORROW

Ottaway, David B. *Wilson Quarterly*. Winter 2010, pp. 48-64.

"The Arab future is not limited to a choice between autocracy and theocracy. As both Turkey and Indonesia powerfully illustrate, there is nothing inherently contradictory between Islam and authentic multiparty democracy. These countries, too, were once ruled by autocrats, and they both have had to figure out the role of Islam in politics. Not only is the Arab world multipolar in wealth and influence; its eastern and western flanks are slowly being pulled in opposite directions by different global markets. Centrifugal economic forces are becoming more powerful than centripetal political ones. For the oil- and gas-exporting gulf states, the thriving economies of China, India, and other Asian nations have become a powerful magnet; for the Maghreb countries, the European Union plays that role. Saudi Arabia aspires to become the prime supplier of foreign oil to gas-guzzling China; Algeria is doubling the capacity to transport its Sahara gas by underwater pipelines to energy-starved Italy and Spain. By contrast, Arab political prospects are deeply troubling. Monarchs, once thought headed for history's dustbin, are doing surprisingly well at the moment. Both royal and secular autocrats are holding their Islamist challengers at bay thanks to highly manipulative or repressive security services. David B. Ottaway is a senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson

Center, worked for *The Washington Post* from 1971 to 2006, including four years in Cairo as the Post's chief Middle East correspondent.

ARMISTICE NOW: AN INTERIM AGREEMENT FOR ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

Yaari, Ehud. *Foreign Affairs*. March/April 2010, pp.50-63.

"More than 16 years after the euphoria of the Oslo accords, the Israelis and the Palestinians have still not reached a final-status peace agreement. Indeed, the last decade has been dominated by setbacks -- the second intifada, which started in September 2000; Hamas' victory in the January 2006 Palestinian legislative elections; and then its military takeover of the Gaza Strip in June 2007 -- all of which have aggravated the conflict. Since an extended impasse is so dangerous, the best option for both the Israelis and the Palestinians is to seek a less ambitious agreement that transforms the situation on the ground and creates momentum for further negotiations by establishing a Palestinian state within armistice boundaries. Many Palestinians now feel that by denying Israel an "end of conflict, end of claims" deal, they are increasing their chances of gaining a state for which they would not be required to make political concessions." *Ehud Yaari is Lafer International Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.*

EUROPE, THE SECOND SUPERPOWER

Moravcsik, Andrew. *Current History*. March 2010, pp. 91-98.

"The world today is bipolar. There are, and will remain for the foreseeable future, two global superpowers: the United States and Europe. Only these two actors are consistently able to project a full spectrum of "smart power" internationally. And European states possess an unmatched range and depth of civilian instruments for international influence. Because the post-cold war world is continuously becoming a more hospitable place for the exercise of forms of power that are, in practice, distinctively European, Europe's influence has increased accordingly. There is every reason to believe this trend will continue. The rise of other powers—the economic success of China, the military prowess of America, the emergence of new partners on Europe's borders— has not undermined Europe's rise; it has enhanced it. Nevertheless, in Washington, Europe is still widely viewed as a declining region, barely able to take care of its own geopolitical interests, and increasingly irrelevant unless it centralizes its policy making. It is ironic that this should be so at a time when high US officials have unanimously embraced the need for more "smart power"— backing up military power with civilian initiatives— yet the American political system seems consistently unable or unwilling to generate the resources for such an effort." *Andrew Moravcsik is a professor of politics and international affairs at Princeton University and the director of the university's European Union program.*

NEW TREATY, NEW INFLUENCE?: EUROPE'S CHANCE TO PUNCH ITS WEIGHT

Luzzatto Gardner, Anthony; Eizenstat, Stuart E. *Foreign Affairs*. March/April 2010, pp.104-120.

"From the founding of the European Economic Community in 1958 until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Washington supported ever-increasing European integration. In doing so, its goal was to contain rivalries between European states, promote Europe's economic dynamism, and strengthen Europe's ability to resist Soviet domination. The approaches of recent U.S. administrations toward the EU have varied. The Clinton administration (in which we both served) unambiguously favored the development of a common EU foreign and security policy, even one that might sometimes conflict or compete with that of the United States. The George W. Bush administration supported EU integration rhetorically, but many

of its policies had the effect, if not the intent, of driving wedges between eu member states over certain issues, particularly the invasion of Iraq. In the neoconservative view of some Bush administration officials, the United States was more likely to achieve its foreign policy goals if Europe was divided and if the United States worked through "coalitions of the willing" than if Europe was unified and able to coordinate its policy centrally. With the current administration, as many former Clinton administration officials have returned to the U.S. government, the pendulum has swung back. The U.S. government will be paying particular attention to whether the Lisbon Treaty enhances the EU's ability to implement a common security policy that might ultimately lead to a common EU defense. The treaty would ultimately hurt U.S. interests if it led to a full-fledged European military structure outside the NATO framework, as such duplication might divert assets away from NATO. An EU military structure might also constrain Europe's already inadequate spending on military preparedness." *Anthony Luzzatto Gardner is Managing Director at Palamon Capital Partners, served as Director for European Affairs on the National Security Council staff (1994-1995). Stuart E. Eizenstat is Head of the International Practice at Covington & Burling LLP. He served in the Clinton administration as U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, Undersecretary of Commerce, Undersecretary of State, and Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, and he was Domestic Policy Adviser to President Jimmy Carter.*

RESETTING U.S.-RUSSIAN RELATIONS: IT TAKES TWO

Kramer, David J. *The Washington Quarterly*. January 2010, pp.61-79.

http://www.twq.com/10january/docs/10jan_Kramer.pdf

"Since Obama's trip to Moscow, provocative visits to Abkhazia and South Ossetia by Medvedev and Putin respectively, Medvedev's renewed threats to target Iskander missiles against the Czech Republic and Poland if U.S. missile defense plans move forward in those two countries, and the murders of human rights activists and charity heads in Chechnya have cast a shadow over the relationship. At the end of the day, Russia's current leadership—corrupt, revisionist, and insecure as it is—will likely decide that perpetuating the image of the United States as a threat is more important to maintaining the Kremlin's grip on power than a new, more positive chapter in U.S.—Russia relations. Four issues are likely to dominate the relationship for the foreseeable future: policy toward Russia's neighbors, missile defense, strategic challenges such as Iran, and developments inside Russia. Alas, none of these issues offers much promise for building a strong foundation for the bilateral relationship." *David J. Kramer is a senior transatlantic fellow with the German Marshall Fund of the United States.*

OBAMA AND LATIN AMERICA: NEW BEGINNINGS, OLD FRICTIONS

Shifter, Michael. *Current History*. February 2010, pp. 67-73.

"Obama's debut on the regional stage was highly successful in improving the mood in US–Latin American relations. Obama's likeability contrasted sharply with his predecessor's, significantly enhancing the favorable image of the United States. This shift mirrors a global upward trend and represents no meager accomplishment for the new administration. Improvement in America's image, though no substitute for substantive policy gains, is an essential step toward repairing the damage of preceding years and rebuilding trust in US foreign policy... The continuing irritations in relations between the United States and Latin America make it all the more urgent that the Obama administration extensively consult with and even more deeply engage the most significant and largely friendly governments in the region, such as Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, and Peru—as well as some select nations like El Salvador and the Dominican Republic in too often overlooked Central America and the Caribbean. Bolstering such ties and offering concrete reassurances of genuine partnership

should be at the top of Washington's agenda in the Americas. The critical challenge is to pursue priorities of mutual interest and to avoid fueling polarization and getting sidetracked." *Michael Shifter, a Current History contributing editor, is vice president for policy at the Inter-American Dialogue and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University.*

CUBA'S BRAVE NEW WORLD

Erikson, Daniel P.; Wander, Paul J. *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*. Fall 2009, pp. 9-28.
http://www.thedialogue.org/PublicationFiles/Erikson-Wander_Forum%2033-2.pdf

"Cuba, once a lonely communist outcast, is now enjoying a wave of international engagement that was virtually inconceivable even a decade ago. Since Raúl Castro took over as provisional president of Cuba in July 2006, Havana has hosted over seventy heads of state, including high profile leaders such as Hu Jintao of China, Dmitry Medvedev of Russia, and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil, in addition to influential officials like former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and EU Development Commissioner Louis Michel. While some regions give the island more attention than others, Cuba's foreign policy is truly global. In Asia, China recently became Cuba's second largest trading partner while African leaders continue to praise Cuban solidarity and medical diplomacy. Last June, Latin American diplomats recently came together to revoke Cuba's suspension from the Organization of American States (OAS), with the tacit agreement of the United States and Canada. The European Union has initiated a new dialogue aimed at normal relations with Cuba and the island's relations with Canada remain strong. Therefore, while the United States continues to debate whether to initiate a dialogue with Cuba and how to go about it, the island has been gradually breaking out of its isolation and consolidating ties with other major players on the international stage." *Daniel P. Erikson is senior associate for U.S. policy and director of Caribbean programs at the Inter-American Dialogue. Paul Wander is program assistant at the Dialogue.*

JIHAD AND PIRACY IN SOMALIA

Stevenson, Jonathan. *Survival*. February/March 2010, pp. 27-38.

"Piracy and rising Islamist militancy have intensified US and European diplomatic interest in Somalia, while . African perceptions of the establishment of US AFRICOM and the growing likelihood that the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa in Djibouti would become a long-term American base, have posed a strategic communications challenge for the United States. A deteriorating humanitarian situation in drought-plagued Somalia, precipitated by the October 2009 US suspension of food aid over fears that aid workers were diverting it to terrorists, and the prospect of unmanageable numbers of Somali refugees fleeing over comparatively stable Kenya's border, have increased pressure on Washington to revise US policy. These factors could lead to a new approach, consonant with the evolving emphasis on nuanced counter-insurgency, involving the application of soft power, such as development aid, with less scrutiny on governance. Robust, high-profile international diplomatic or military initiatives in Somalia, however, are unlikely. Near-term developments in Somalia will probably follow the depressingly familiar pattern whereby the Transitional Federal Government and Islamist militias maintain an uneasy military stalemate, with neither building the political infrastructure and good will required to tip the balance decisively." *Jonathan Stevenson is a Contributing Editor to Survival and Professor of Strategic Studies at the US Naval War College.*

THE NEW SCHIZOPHRENIA: ASIA BETWEEN INTEGRATION AND ISOLATION

Kurlantzick, Joshua. *Current History*. January 2010, pp.24-30.

The region is experiencing a new schizophrenia, a range of strategic changes that often seem contradictory— and could potentially prove disastrous. On one hand, many cultural, economic, and political trends suggest that Asian nations are becoming more integrated and even developing a regional consciousness. In particular, Asian opinion leaders—cultural elites, business executives, top foreign policy thinkers, and some senior diplomats—have embraced the process of regional integration. For the first time in its history, Asia is beginning to build real regional institutions, and nations are starting to cooperate on even the most sensitive issues, like intelligence sharing, environmental change, and the cross-border spread of infectious diseases... Yet the United States must attempt a difficult balancing act: maintaining its role as the region's most important security actor and diplomatic broker while assigning much greater priority to strengthening regional institutions. First and foremost, this will require a basic change from a bilateral to a multilateral approach in security and economic policy. *Joshua Kurlantzick is a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and author of Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World (Yale University Press, 2007).*

THE LONG ROAD TO ZERO: OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES TO A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD

Ferguson, Charles D. *Foreign Affairs*. January/February 2010, pp. 86-94.

"Over the past three years, a remarkable bipartisan consensus has emerged in Washington regarding nuclear security. The new U.S. nuclear agenda includes renewing formal arms control agreements with Russia, revitalizing a strategic dialogue with China, pushing for ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, repairing the damaged nuclear nonproliferation regime, and redoubling efforts to reduce and secure fissile material that may be used in weapons. In order to speed the reduction of its own nuclear arsenal and encourage other countries' disarmament, the United States will have to confront three daunting obstacles: the insecurities of nations, including some currently protected under the U.S. nuclear umbrella and others that see a nuclear capability as the answer to many of their security problems; the notion that nuclear weapons are the great equalizer in the realm of international relations; and the proliferation risk that inevitably arises whenever nuclear supplier states offer to build civilian reactors for nonnuclear states." *Charles D. Ferguson is President of the Federation of American Scientists. From 2004 to 2009, he was Senior Fellow for Science and Technology at the Council on Foreign Relations, where he served as Project Director for the CFR-sponsored Independent Task Force on U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy.*

NUCLEAR DISORDER

Allison, Graham. *Foreign Affairs*. January/February 2010, pp. 74-85.

"The global nuclear order today could be as fragile as the global financial order was two years ago, when conventional wisdom declared it to be sound, stable, and resilient. In the aftermath of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, a confrontation that he thought had one chance in three of ending in nuclear war, US Pres John F. Kennedy concluded that the nuclear order of the time posed unacceptable risks to mankind. The current global nuclear order is extremely fragile, and the three most urgent challenges to it are North Korea, Iran, and Pakistan. If North Korea and Iran become established nuclear weapons states over the next several years, the nonproliferation regime will have been hollowed out. Most of the foreign policy community has still not absorbed the facts about North Korean developments over the past eight years. One of the poorest and most isolated states on earth, North Korea had at most two bombs' worth of plutonium in 2001." *Graham Allison is Douglas Dillon Professor*

of Government and Director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

U.S. DOMESTIC POLICY AND TRENDS

REPORTS

2010 ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Council of Economic Advisers, The White House. February 2010.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/cea/economic-report-of-the-President>

"The Economic Report of the President is an annual report written by the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers. An important vehicle for presenting the Administration's domestic and international economic policies, it provides an overview of the nation's economic progress with text and extensive data appendices."

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

Vice President Joe Biden. The White House. February 2010 [PDF format, 31 pages]

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/20100216-annual-report-progress-recovery-act.pdf>

"A year ago on February 17, 2009, Congress passed, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. One year after the passage of the Act, we can report that approximately 2 million jobs have been created or saved thanks to the Act's impact on hiring in the private sector, by local and state governments and by non-profits. By design, the Act had three primary purposes: Rescue, Recovery and Reinvestment. The enclosed report reviews our progress in each of these three areas. Almost 20 million Americans have gotten extended unemployment benefits thanks to the Act, and over 95 percent of working families have had their taxes cut. Jobs have been created thanks to tens of thousands of projects now underway nationwide. And the groundwork for the economy of the next century is being put in place as we invest in high speed rail, health technology, broadband, a smarter electrical grid, clean cars and batteries, and renewable energy."

POLICIES FOR INCREASING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT IN 2010 AND 2011

Yang, Susan. Congressional Budget Office (CBO). January 2010 [PDF format, 34 pages]

<http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/108xx/doc10803/01-14-Employment.pdf>

"At the request of the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has examined the potential role and efficacy of fiscal policy options in increasing economic growth and employment, particularly over the next two years. This paper summarizes the current economic outlook, reviews criteria for setting fiscal policy under such economic conditions, and assesses the potential impact on output and employment of a variety of policy options. Some options would reduce taxes on individuals or increase aid to the unemployed and others, increasing the disposable income of households and thus boosting demand. Other options would increase cash flow and reduce taxes for firms, which would encourage firms to invest and hire and thus increase employment. Additional options would increase federal spending by investing in infrastructure or providing aid to state governments, which would strengthen demand for

goods and services and reduce further losses of state and local government jobs. CBO concludes that further policy action, if properly designed, would promote economic growth and increase employment in 2010 and 2011. The policies analyzed vary in cost-effectiveness as measured by the cumulative effects on GDP and employment per dollar of budgetary cost and in the time patterns of those effects. Policies that could be implemented relatively quickly or targeted toward people whose consumption tends to be restricted by their income, such as reducing payroll taxes for firms that increase payroll or increasing aid to the unemployed, would have the largest effects on output and employment per dollar of budgetary cost in 2010 and 2011." *Susan Yang is an analyst of the Macroeconomic Analysis Division at the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).*

THE BEIGE BOOK 2010

The Federal Reserve Board. March 3, 2010 [HTML format, various paging]
<http://federalreserve.gov/fomc/beigebook/2010/20100303/FullReport.htm>

Commonly known as the Beige Book, this report is published eight times per year. Each Federal Reserve Bank gathers anecdotal information on current economic conditions in its District through reports from Bank and Branch directors and interviews with key business contacts, economists, market experts, and other sources. Reports from the twelve Federal Reserve Districts indicated that economic conditions continued to expand since the last report, although severe snowstorms in early February held back activity in several Districts. Nine Districts reported that economic activity improved, but in most cases the increases were modest. The demand for services was generally positive across Districts, most notably for health-care and information technology firms. Of the five Districts reporting on transportation, three characterized activity as improved over the previous survey. Manufacturing activity strengthened in most regions, particularly in the high-tech equipment, automobile, and metal industries.

MIDDLE CLASS IN AMERICA

Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. January 2010 [PDF format, 43 pages]
http://www.commerce.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@opa/documents/content/prod01_008833.pdf

The Department of Commerce issued this report for Vice President Biden's Middle Class Task Force. The report, which identifies what it means to be middle class in America today, uses a host of measures to show that it is more difficult today to both attain and maintain a middle-class lifestyle than it was two decades ago. "Most Americans consider themselves middle class. This raises the question, what does it mean to be middle class? This report examines various definitions, discusses middle class values and aspirations, and presents hypothetical budgets showing how these aspirations might be achieved with different incomes. The report also looks back two decades to examine whether it is more or less difficult to attain a middle class lifestyle today. "While incomes for married-couple and single-parent families with two children have increased significantly, much of this rise occurred in the 1990s. In part, these increases occurred because parents are working more hours in order to maintain higher income levels. Unfortunately, while incomes have risen, the prices for three large components of middle class expenses have increased faster than income: the cost of college, the cost of health care and the cost of a house. Thus, we conclude that it is harder to attain a middle class lifestyle now than it was in the recent past."

THE POWER OF OPEN GOVERNMENT

Remarks by Cass Sunstein at the Brookings Institution. March 10, 2010 [PDF format, 124 pages]

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2010/0310_open_government/20100310_open_government_sunstein.pdf

President Obama pledged to make his administration the most open and transparent in history and signed the Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government to make government more accountable soon after taking office. In December, the Office of Management and Budget released the Open Government Directive, instructing federal agencies to improve the quality of government information and to embrace a culture of open government. At the center of that effort is Cass Sunstein, administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) at the White House. On Wednesday, March 10, Brookings Co-Director of Economic Studies Ted Gayer moderated an event with Cass Sunstein. Sunstein discussed the implementation of this new initiative and addressed some of the fundamental questions facing modern government, including ways to increase participation and transparency in rulemaking and how to democratize data. He explained how his office is striving for regulation that supports fairness, equity and the role of cost-benefit analysis and behavioral economics in regulation.

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS: HOW YOUNG LATINOS COME OF AGE IN AMERICA

Pew Hispanic Center. December 11, 2009 [PDF format, 162 pages]

<http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/117.pdf>

"Hispanics are the largest and youngest minority group in the United States. One-in-five schoolchildren is Hispanic. One-in-four newborns is Hispanic. Never before in this country's history has a minority ethnic group made up so large a share of the youngest Americans. By force of numbers alone, the kinds of adults these young Latinos become will help shape the kind of society America becomes in the 21st century. This report takes an in-depth look at Hispanics who are ages 16 to 25, a phase of life when young people make choices that—for better and worse—set their path to adulthood. For this particular ethnic group, it is also a time when they navigate the intricate, often porous borders between the two cultures they inhabit—American and Latin American. The report explores the attitudes, values, social behaviors, family characteristics, economic well-being, educational attainment and labor force outcomes of these young Latinos. It is based on a new Pew Hispanic Center telephone survey of a nationally representative sample of 2,012 Latinos, supplemented Center's analysis of government demographic, economic data sets.

PUBLIC'S PRIORITIES FOR 2010: ECONOMY, JOBS, TERRORISM

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. January 25, 2010 [PDF format, 19 pages]

<http://people-press.org/reports/pdf/584.pdf>

"As Barack Obama begins his second year in office, the public's priorities for the president and Congress remain much as they were one year ago. Strengthening the nation's economy and improving the job situation continue to top the list. And, in the wake of the failed Christmas Day terrorist attack on a Detroit-bound airliner, defending the country from future terrorist attacks also remains a top priority. At the same time, the public has shifted the emphasis it assigns to two major policy issues: dealing with the nation's energy problem and reducing the budget deficit. About half (49%) say that dealing with the nation's energy problem should be a top priority, down from 60% a year ago. At the same time, there has been a modest rise in the percentage saying that reducing the budget deficit should be a top priority, from 53% to 60%." Other policy priorities show little change from a year ago. For example, despite the ongoing debate over health care reform, about as many now call

reducing health care costs a top priority (57%) as did so in early 2009 (59%). In fact, the percentage rating health care costs a top priority is lower now than it was in both 2008 (69%) and 2007 (68%)."

THE SUBURBANIZATION OF POVERTY: TRENDS IN METROPOLITAN AMERICA, 2000 TO 2008

Kneebone, Elizabeth; Garr, Emily. Metropolitan Policy Program, the Brookings Institution. January, 2010 [PDF format, 24 pages]

http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2010/0120_poverty_kneebone.aspx#

The authors analyze recent American poverty trends, finding that suburbs are now home to the largest and fastest growing poor population in the country. The suburban poor population grew by 25 percent between 2000 and 2008—almost five times faster than cities and 10 points above the national growth rate. "In light of the ongoing economic challenges facing communities throughout the country, this study builds on previous Brookings research to examine how city and suburban poverty trends have changed since 2000, and whether recent events have further altered the spatial distribution of the poor. Using the most recent American Community Survey data, the authors update the analysis to 2008 and broaden the geographic scope to include not only cities and suburbs in the largest metro areas, but smaller metro areas and non-metropolitan areas as well, for a complete geographic picture of changes in America's poor population since 2000. "The latest data confirm that, since 2000 and in the wake of two national economic downturns, poverty has increased significantly in metropolitan and non-metropolitan communities alike. However, while poverty has grown on the whole, the most recent data also make clear that American poverty is becoming an increasingly suburban phenomenon. Suburbs in the nation's largest metro areas are now home to the fastest-growing and largest poor population in the country—a reality that is not likely to change in the coming years given both the longer run and more near term factors that have contributed to this shift in the geography of American poverty. Among these factors, not surprisingly, jobs play an important role in shaping these trends. Since the late 1990s jobs in almost every major metro area have continued to shift away from the urban core toward the metropolitan fringe, regardless of industry or whether the regional job market was expanding or contracting." *Elizabeth Kneebone is a Senior Research Analyst and Emily Garr is a Senior Research Assistant at the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution.*

HOW WOULD STATES BE AFFECTED BY HEALTH REFORM?

Holahan, John; Linda Blumberg. Urban Institute. January 25, 2010 [PDF format, 24 pages]

http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412015_affected_by_health_reform.pdf

The report examines various pathways through which individuals could gain coverage through the Senate and House health reform proposals. "We show that large shares of the population, particularly the uninsured, could potentially gain coverage under health reform through one pathway or another, depending on income and employment status. The number of individuals who would gain coverage and how they would gain coverage varies considerably among states. The benefits of the reform would be disproportionately in southern and western states due to their current low levels of coverage and low incomes." *John Holahan, Ph.D., is the director of the Health Policy Center of the Urban Institute. Linda Blumberg is a senior fellow at the Health Policy Center.*

RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION IN AMERICAN PUBLIC LIFE: A JOINT STATEMENT OF CURRENT LAW

Center for Religion and Public Affairs, Wake Forest University School of Divinity. January 2010. [PDF format, 36 pages]

<http://divinity.wfu.edu/pdf/DivinityLawStatement.pdf>

"In January, 2010 a diverse working group of religious and secular leaders unveiled a joint statement about current laws regarding religious expression in the United States. This document does not focus on what the law should be, but rather what the law is today. The joint statement seeks to provide accessible and useful information for Americans about this area of law, and enrich the conversation surrounding religious liberties. While there is disagreement among the drafters about the merits of some of the court decisions and laws mentioned in the document, the drafters agree that current law protects the rights of people to express their religious convictions and practice their faiths on government property and in public life as described in the statement. Signatories discussed current legal protections of religious expressions, including issues such as religion and politics; religious gatherings on government property; chaplains in legislative bodies, prisons and the military; and religion in the workplace. They also discussed the history and future of common-ground projects in the religious freedom field."

FACING OUR FUTURE: CHILDREN IN THE AFTERMATH OF IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

Chaudry, Ajay, et al. Urban Institute. February 2, 2010 [PDF format, 96 pages]

http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412020_FacingOurFuture_final.pdf

"The report examines the consequences of parental arrest, detention, and deportation on 190 children in 85 families in six locations, providing in-depth details on parent-child separations, economic hardships, and children's well-being. The contentious immigration debates around the country mostly revolve around illegal immigration. Less visible have been the 5.5 million children with unauthorized parents, almost three-quarters of whom are U.S.-born citizens. Over several years, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) intensified enforcement activities through large-scale worksite arrests, home arrests, and arrests by local law enforcement. The report provides recommendations for stakeholders to mitigate the harmful effects of immigration enforcement on children." *Ajay Chaudry is a researcher at the Urban Institute.*

EXPANDING CHOICE IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION: A REPORT ON RETHINKING THE FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION

Greene, Jay, et al. Brookings Institution. February 2, 2010 [Note: contains copyrighted material] [PDF format, 32 pages]

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2010/0202_school_choice/0202_school_choice.pdf

"Education choice exercises a powerful pull on parents of school children: Twenty-four percent report that they moved to their current neighborhood so their children could attend their current school; 15 percent of public school students attend parent-selected rather than district-assigned schools; the charter school and homeschooling sectors have grown from nothing to 2.6 percent and 3 percent of total enrollment respectively; private schools capture 11 percent of enrollment; and virtual schooling is poised for explosive growth. Consistent with these behavioral manifestations of the desire of parents to choose their children's schools, schools of choice consistently generate more positive evaluations from parents than assigned schools." *Jay Greene is endowed chair and head of the Department of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas and a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute. Greene conducts research and writes about education policy.*

THE ONLINE LEARNING IMPERATIVE: A SOLUTION TO THREE LOOMING CRISES IN EDUCATION

Wise, Bob; Rothman, Robert. Alliance for Excellent Education. February 2010 [Note: contains copyrighted material][PDF format, 9 pages]

<http://www.all4ed.org/files/OnlineLearning.pdf>

The paper details how the integral use of online technology in today's secondary school classrooms can strengthen the teacher workforce, improve student outcomes, and allow states to do more despite flat education budgets. According to the paper, state and local public officials are faced with stark realities that will force major changes in traditional education processes, especially for middle and high schools. *Bob Wise is president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former governor of West Virginia. Robert Rothman is a senior fellow at the Alliance.*

HOW ONLINE LEARNING IS REVOLUTIONIZING K-12 EDUCATION AND BENEFITING STUDENTS

Lips, Dan. The Heritage Foundation. January 12, 2010 [PDF format, 9 pages]

http://s3.amazonaws.com/thf_media/2010/pdf/bq_2356.pdf

"Virtual or online learning is revolutionizing American education. It has the potential to dramatically expand the educational opportunities of American students, largely overcoming the geographic and demographic restrictions. Virtual learning also has the potential to improve the quality of instruction, while increasing productivity and lowering costs, ultimately reducing the burden on taxpayers. Local, state, and federal policymakers should reform education policies and funding to facilitate online learning, particularly by allowing funding to follow the students to their learning institutions of choice." *Dan Lips is Senior Policy Analyst in Education in the Domestic Policy Studies Department at The Heritage Foundation.*

SOCIAL NETWORKING IN GOVERNMENT: OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Human Capital Institute. January 2010 [PDF format, 5 pages]

http://www.hci.org/files/field_content_file/SNGovt_SummaryFINAL.pdf

"Social networking (SN) has become the new online rage. Blogs, wikis, RSS feeds and social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn have provided creative ways to recruit, engage, connect and retain employees. They have also provided an opportunity to facilitate strategic knowledge sharing across organizations and government agencies. Most SN tools are Web-based and provide a variety of ways for users who share interests and/or activities to interact. Users can share best practices and build communities of practice. These tools provide email and instant messaging services — constant connectivity. SN tools can help with the current challenges facing today's government agencies such as *brain drain* from a retiring workforce, the need to create inter-agency knowledge sharing and an increased need to imbed talent tools where the work is getting done." According to the report, Sixty-six (66) percent of government workplaces use some type of SN tool — and sixty-five (65) percent of those are using more than one tool."

THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET

The Pew Internet & American Life Project. February 19, 2010 [PDF format, 48 pages]

<http://pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2010/Future%20of%20internet%202010%20-%20AAS%20paper.pdf>

This is the fourth in a series of Internet expert studies conducted by the Imagining the Internet Center at Elon University and the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project. A survey of nearly 900 Internet stakeholders reveals fascinating new perspectives on the way the Internet is affecting human intelligence and the ways that information is being shared and rendered. The web-based survey gathered opinions from prominent scientists, business leaders, consultants, writers and technology developers.

ARTICLES

OBAMA'S FIRST YEAR

Sabato, Larry J. *Sabato's Crystal Ball*. January 21, 2010.

<http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/ljs2010012102/>

"As we look back on a tumultuous first year for President Barack Obama, three questions matter. What have we learned about him? What has he learned about his job? And how much does the first year foretell about the Obama presidency? In many ways Obama in office has acted much as advertised on the campaign trail. He is methodical, cerebral, professorial, and unusually focused. "No Drama Obama", as he is called, isn't given to angry outbursts, emotionalism of any kind, or snap decisions. Many people prefer this kind of governing style, though it limits his effectiveness at times of national anguish and prevents him from employing populist tactics that could aid him politically. Obama trusts and follows his instincts even when he pays a political price. He took months to formulate a clear approach on Afghanistan, and the more criticism he received for the length of his policy review, the more determined he seemed to dot every "I" and cross every "T" before announcing his plans." *Larry J. Sabato, Director of the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia.*

THE THIRTEEN RACES TO WATCH

Fortier, John C. *The American*. February 12, 2010.

<http://www.american.com/archive/2010/february/the-thirteen-races-to-watch>

"Republicans' prospects for major pickups in the Senate have improved significantly over the past year. What once looked like more possible Republican seat losses due to retirements and open seats now looks like a very good year for the GOP. Picking up ten seats and the majority is almost certainly out of reach for Republicans, although, with a few more strong recruits and some breaks, what recently seemed an impossible dream has become a remote possibility. Here are the top 13 Senate races that Republicans have a strong chance to win in 2010."

FOR DEMOCRATS, IT'S TIME TO WORRY

Cook, Rhodes. *Sabato's Crystal Ball*. January 28, 2010.

<http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/frc2010012801/>

"For Democrats, it is officially time to worry. The party's gubernatorial losses in Virginia and New Jersey last fall could be partially explained away as the states' usual off-year swing to the "out" party. But Republican Scott Brown's come-from-behind victory last week in the special Massachusetts Senate election for Ted Kennedy's Senate seat is something else – a harshly delivered slap in the face from voters in one of the most loyally Democratic states in the country. The enthusiasm gap that favored Barack Obama and the Democrats in 2008 has shifted to his opponents. The independents that buttressed Democrats in the last two election cycles have moved in large numbers to the other side. And President Obama has

been unable to stem the tide, even with the investment of his political capital into each losing campaign. A look at the numbers shows the sharp reversal of fortune that has taken place in the last year. Obama swept Virginia, New Jersey and Massachusetts in the 2008 presidential balloting by a combined margin of more than 1.5 million votes. Since then, Republicans have won the major statewide races in the three states by an aggregate plurality in excess of 500,000 votes." Rhodes Cook, Senior Columnist.

REPUBLICAN RENAISSANCE?

Wood, Isaac. *Sabato's Crystal Ball*. February 18, 2010.

<http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/itw2010021801/>

"The last two U.S. House of Representatives elections have been Democratic landslides that have left them with a 79-seat majority. In 2006, Democrats picked up 29 seats on election night (exactly as the *Crystal Ball* predicted, by the way) and didn't lose a single seat of their own, even adding another pick-up in a December runoff. The winning streak continued in 2008, with Democrats netting 21 new seats in what was a Blue year across the board. A month and a half into the midterm year of 2010, already Republicans can feel the tide turning. The electoral disasters of 2006 and 2008, due to the toxic unpopularity of George W. Bush and the war in Iraq, represented the dark ages for the GOP, but now they sense a Republican Renaissance in 2010." *Isaac Wood is the editor of Sabato's Crystal Ball.*

THE FOUR QUADRANTS OF CONGRESS

Brownstein, Ronald. *National Journal*. February 6, 2010.

"In the competition to control the House, demography increasingly appears to be destiny. Across the country, race and education levels have emerged as central fault lines in the division of House seats between Republicans and Democrats, a *National Journal* analysis of recently released census data shows. Although regional differences still matter, demographic factors that transcend region now play powerful roles in shaping each party's representation in the House. Generally, the greater the district's nonwhite population and the higher the education level of its white residents, the more likely it is to be represented in the House by a Democrat. In contrast, the analysis found, the whiter the district and the lower its number of white college graduates, the more likely it is to elect a Republican. The pattern vividly captures the class inversion that has remade the two parties' electoral coalitions over the past several decades. Since the days of Andrew Jackson, Democrats have viewed themselves as tribunes of the working class, yet they now principally rely on a bifurcated coalition of minorities and well-educated whites. And although Republicans often view themselves as the party of business, their most reliable supporters now tend to be working-class whites with conservative views on social, foreign-policy, and spending issues."

HOW THE RECESSION HAS CHANGED AMERICAN MIGRATION

Barone, Michael. *The American*. February 17, 2010.

<http://www.american.com/archive/2010/february/how-the-recession-has-changed-american-migration>

"America's changing demography has had enormous consequences in every realm of life. Americans historically have been a mobile people. But the old saying that Americans have been moving from the Snow Belt to the Sun Belt fails to capture what has been happening from 1990 to the onset of the current recession in 2007. And there are entirely new realities due to the recession that are remaking states and regions in important ways." *Michael Barone is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.*

HOW A NEW JOBLESS ERA WILL TRANSFORM AMERICA

Peck, Don. *The Atlantic Monthly*. March 2010.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/201003/jobless-america-future>

The author notes that the official unemployment figures in the U.S. understate the magnitude of the jobs crisis; the percentage of unemployed and underemployed have approached the highest figure since the 1930s. Despite official pronouncements that the recession is over, a prolonged era of high joblessness is just beginning. Peck writes that it will have a profound effect on the prospects, character and behavior patterns of a generation of young people who are just now trying to enter the workforce. For the first time in U.S. history, the majority of the jobs in the country will be held by women, as the shrinking of the traditional manufacturing industries and trades falls disproportionately on men. Peck fears that the longer the jobless period lasts, the greater the negative effect it will have on the stability of households and communities around the country.

PRESS FREEDOM: SHOULD PARTISAN BLOGGERS GET FREE-PRESS PROTECTIONS?

Peter Katel. *The CQ Researcher*. February 5, 2010, pp. 97-120.

"Wrenching changes in the news business are starting to alter the legal landscape for journalists. The federal Freedom of Information Act and "shield" laws in many states give reporters access to official documents and offer some protections against prosecutors who demand to know their confidential sources or information that reporters have gathered. But amid catastrophic revenue declines, media companies struggling to stay afloat have less money to throw into court fights to enforce their journalistic rights. And the increasing numbers of online bloggers — including those who call themselves independent journalists — have even fewer resources. Moreover, politicians have been arguing over which kinds of bloggers — if any — should be defined as journalists entitled to free-press protections. The debate on that issue has stalled progress on a proposed federal shield law in the Senate, though backers were hopeful of reaching a compromise."

WHAT MAKES A GREAT TEACHER?

Ripley, Amanda. *The Atlantic Monthly*. January/February 2010.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/01/what-makes-a-great-teacher/7841/>

Ripley writes that educational systems in the U.S. "have never identified excellent teachers in any reliable, objective way ... Instead, we tend to ascribe their gifts to some mystical quality that we can recognize and revere -- but not replicate." However, one organization in America has been systematically pursuing this goal for more than a decade -- tracking hundreds of thousands of kids, and analyzing why some teachers can move kids three grade levels ahead in one year and others can't. Teach for America, a nonprofit that recruits college graduates to spend two years teaching in low-income schools, began outside the educational establishment and has largely remained there. Almost half a million American children are being taught by its 7,300 teachers this year, and the organization tracks test-score data, linked to each teacher, for 85 percent to 90 percent of those kids, most of whom are poor and African-American or Latino. Teach for America has found that "superstar" teachers set big goals for their students, recruit students and their families into the teaching process and ensure that everything they do contributes to student learning; however, the most important trait of all is that superstar teachers are incredibly persistent in attaining goals. Knowledge matters, but not in every case, Teach for America has found; graduating from an elite school or having a master's degree in education does not make much difference on classroom effectiveness. Now that the Obama administration is offering USD 4 billion to identify and cultivate effective teachers, the states must take radical steps in the

education field, where efforts to measure teacher performance based on student test scores have long been fought.

HOW AMERICA CAN RISE AGAIN

Fallows, James. *The Atlantic Monthly*. January/February 2010.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/01/how-america-can-rise-again/7839/>

"Is America going to hell? After a year of economic calamity that many fear has sent us into irreversible decline, the author finds reassurance in the peculiarly American cycle of crisis and renewal, and in the continuing strength of the forces that have made the country great: our university system, our receptiveness to immigration, our culture of innovation. In most significant ways, the U.S. remains the envy of the world. But here's the alarming problem: our governing system is old and broken and dysfunctional. Fixing it—without resorting to a constitutional convention or a coup—is the key to securing the nation's future." *James Fallows is a National Correspondent for The Atlantic. He is a former speechwriter for Jimmy Carter.*

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<http://www.embusa.es/irc>

Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect U.S. government policies.